

Eritrean refugees in Egypt in photos

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The Center for Arab-West Understanding Learning Center accepted 15 Eritrean refugee students for the academic year 2019-2020 and asked Samuel McVicar and me to visit their families. This resulted in an article for Arab-West Report and these photos. All families have to get by with very little money and all of them are living in very small flats in a popular lower class area in Cairo.

1

Left: Meron Galazghi (17 years old).
Right: Ahman Galazghi (15 years old).
The two brothers left their village, Erra, in Eritrea in 2017. In the picture, they are in the living room in the apartment that they share with a family of one mother and three sons. Meron and Ahman are not related to the family. Six people in the apartment of approximately 40m2.



2

Left: Meron Galazghi (17 years old).
Right: Ahman Galazghi (15 years old).
The two brothers left their village, Erra, in Eritrea in 2017. In the picture, they are in the room they sleep, in the apartment that they share with a family of one mother and three sons.



3(right)

Portrait of Ahman Galazghi (15 years old) in the living room of the apartment they live with his brother, Meron, and a family of one mother and three sons.



4(left)

Portrait of Meron Galazghi (17 years old) in the living room of the apartment he lives with his brother Ahman and a family of one mother and three sons.

5

Left: Ahman Galazghi (15 years old).
Right: Meron Galazghi (17 years old).
The two brothers left their village, Erra, in Eritrea in 2017. In the picture, they are in the living room in the apartment that they share with a family of one mother and three sons.



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Senait Medin, 45 years, with her two sons: Mandela, 18 years old, and Daniel, 6 years old. This is the room (6m²) they live with also her daughter, Sara of 19 years old. They share the apartment with an Eritrean man, who has been living in Egypt for 11 years. Mandela sleeps on the mattress in the floor that is too small for him.



7

Portrait of Senait Medin, 45 years old. She takes care of three children alone. They have been living in Cairo for two years. Born in Eritrea, Senait left the country to live with her husband in the United Arab Emirates, with whom she gave birth to Sara and Mandela. After they divorced, she went back to her country and, there, she had a relationship with a high-ranking military officer. Then, she became pregnant with Daniel. Since Senait is Catholic, she asked Daniel's father to allow their child to follow his mother's religion. Father initially agreed, however, later he demanded that she and her son would convert to Islam. Fearing being arrested at the behest of this officer, Senait ran away from Eritrea, going to Sudan. They lived there for three years before moving



to Egypt. Senait and her three kids share a tiny room. To work, she needs to take three buses. Her salary is 200 pounds per day, equivalent to 40 reals or 1,1 Euro. From 8 to 6pm, Sunday to Thursday, she needs to leave her kids alone – when they are not at school.

8

The yellow Asylum Seeker Registration Card of Meron Galazghi (17 years old) and his brother Ahman Galazghi (15 years old). They receive this card when they register at the UNHCR. They are waiting for the next UNHCR calls to get the green card, which means they are closer to get asylum somewhere.



9

Samuel McVicar (middle, Arab West Report) interviewing Senait Medin (left), with Amr (right, from St. Joseph's Church, who took us to the family), in the living room of the apartment where she lives with her four kids and the another Eritrean that rents the apartment. The living room must be approximately 15m2.



10

Helen's family in a room of the apartment of approximately 15m2. The apartment they live in houses mother and four kids, ages between 15 and 4. It has beds for everyone, three rooms, with approximately 15m2 each, one bathroom (6m2), one living room (20m2) and one kitchen. In 2016, the father was arrested by the Eritrean government, at which time they fled the country on foot, because they were scared of getting arrested too. The mother has 9 sisters who also fled and they are spread all around the world. Some have managed to get to Europe and even as far as Canada since they don't have children



11

Tigisti, Helen's mother, and Ihab, 13 years old, Helen's brother, in the living room.



12

Tigisti, Helen's mother, and Ihab, 13 years old, Helen's brother, in the living room. They are all Christians.



13

Samuel McVicar during the interview with Helen's family. In the middle, cousin Mirha and to the right, a sister, in the living room.



14_(right)

Samuel McVicar during the interview with Helen's family. To the left, Helen. In the middle, mother Tigisti and to the right, brother Ihab.



15_(left)

Portrait of Helen's cousin, Mirha, in the living room preparing tea.



16_(right)

Portrait of Helen's youngest sister, Habte, of 4 years old.